

of Russia in European politics is harmful, menacing, and unjustifiable. She is not, in character, a European power, and she brings no contribution to European civilization, but the contrary. She has neither the capital nor the character to enable her to execute the share in the world's affairs which she is assuming. Her territorial extensions for two hundred years have been made at the cost of her internal strength. The latter has never been at all proportioned to the former. Consequently the debt and taxes due to her policy of expansion and territorial greatness have crushed her peasant class, and by their effect on agriculture have choked the sources of national strength. The people are peaceful and industrious, and their traditional mores are such that they would develop great productive power and in time rise to a strong civilization of a truly indigenous type, if they were free to use their powers in their own way to satisfy their interests as they experience them from the life conditions which they have to meet.

93. Emancipation in Russia and the United States. In the time of Peter the Great the ancient national mores of Russia were very strong and firmly established. They remain to this day, in the mass of the population, unchanged in their essential integrity. There is, amongst the upper classes, an imitation of French ways, but it is unimportant for the nation. The autocracy is what makes "Russia," as a political unit. The autocracy is the apex of a military system, by which a great territory has been gathered under one control. That operation has not affected the old mores of the people. The tsar Alexander II was convinced by reading the writings of the great literary coterie of the middle of the nineteenth century that serfdom ought to be

abolished, and
he determined that it should be done.¹ It is not in
the system of
autocracy that the autocrat shall have original
opinions and adopt
an independent initiative. The men whom he
ordered to abolish
serfdom had to devise a method, and they devised
one which
was to appear satisfactory to the tsar, but was to
protect the
interests which they cared for. One is reminded of
the devices
of American politicians to satisfy the clamor of
the moment,
but to change nothing. The reform had but slight
root in public

¹ Simkhovitsch, *Feldgemeinschaft in Russland*> Chap.
XXIX.